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THE FALSE WIDOW; OR, FLORIEN REDESDALE'S FORTUNE.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,
Author of "Adria, the Adopted," "Strangely Wed," "Madame Durand's Protege."

CHAPTER I.

THE DESERT ISLE.

MID-OCEAN.

A sky like a canopy of pearl, with the sun hung like a burning globe against it. The sea glassily calm, with one tiny object dotting the watery waste.

A boat lay motionless upon the quiet ocean's breast. A torn rag of a sail hung limp at the mast, but not a puff of air stirred its tattered folds. The intense heat had beaten down until the seams of the little craft gaped wide; it was rudderless, utterly at the mercy of wind or wave.

During this dead calm, the brine of the ocean stole in at the opened cracks, and only constant bailing kept the boat afloat. It held two occupants—a man and a woman. The man lay in the bottom of the boat, with sunken wild eyes glaring about him, wailed now and again by the heavy lids when he would drift away in unconsciousness; his lips were swollen, purple and cracked, and a mutter or a groan broke over them as the agony he was enduring forced an utterance. The woman had suffered less, but famine was stamped on her features and looked out of her hollow eyes. She was on her knees, monotonously dipping out the rising flood, casting a glance now and then at her companion in distress, or searching the horizon for a sail.

For fourteen days and nights only those few planks had intervened between them and eternity; for half that time they had been without food or water, except once when a dead fish floated to the surface near them. The woman had secured it and torn it ravenously with her strong, white teeth;

but the man turned away from the portion she offered him with a shudder of disgust, and without proffering it a second time, she finished the last morsel. Later, his appetite might have overcome his fastidiousness, but not another scrap of even such questionable fare came to their view.

Stealthily increasing, the water crept in through the widening seams. The woman saw it with fear and despair, but never paused in her task of bailing out the boat.

"It's no use struggling," she said harshly, throwing a burning look toward the man. "There's not a sail to be seen, and we'll not keep afloat till night."

He made no answer, but moved painfully, looking up at the pitiless sky.

"It's certain death to us both, I suppose," she continued in a reckless tone. "If either escape, though, it will be me. Give me the papers, Alec; they'll do no one any good at the bottom of the ocean."

He thrust his hand into his breast, and as if her words recalled a little of his strength, raised himself on one elbow, and glared a warning at her as she would have drawn nearer.

"Keep off!" he gasped, hoarsely. "As Heaven hears me I'll throw them into the sea first."

"They'll go there soon. It's no great matter, but I would regard your wishes if I got back, Alec. I've faced death since we started on this voyage, and I'd never risk the consequences now that I might have plotted for once."

Had he seen the cunning gleam in those downcast eyes, he would have been further assured of the insincerity of her words. It was replaced by the sullen dullness of despair

as her thoughts reverted to their situation. She flung down the vessel she had used for bailing, and let her hands drop.

"We may as well die first as last. It's only an hour or two more at best."

With a cry the man rose up, with outstretched, quivering arms.

"Look, Mirette, look! An island in the sky!"

They both saw it, a long, low line of land, seemingly set in that canopy of dazzling blue. Their eyes turned upon the surrounding waters in eager expectation, but not so much as a straw met their searching gaze.

"An illusion—but the illusions of this life are nearly past for me," said Mirette, bitterly.

The other sunk back weak and trembling, but with a ray of hope flickering in his breast.

"I've heard of such things before," he said, panting. "I can't give an explanation of the phenomenon, but that was a reflection of a real island we have just seen. Oh, if we could but reach it, if there was any way—"

As if invoked by his words, a breath of air ruffled the utter calm, and stirred the tattered sail. With hope renewed, the woman went to work again with feverish vigor clearing the fragile shell of the rising water.

Presently came another puff of air, and in half an hour a stiff breeze was blowing. Then a shadow rushed up as if from the very midst of the sea. It widened and darkened, the sky grew speedily overcast, the increasing stir of the waters broke them into waves, which ran momentarily higher. A sudden storm was racing into effect.

A short interval and then it broke upon them. The crazy boat rocked and dipped and seemed on the point of capsizing; it was driven before the wind, and beaten back by the waves. Mirette lowered the ragged sail, which, inefficient at the best, was an added danger now.

The rain burst over them in a blinding sheet of a few minutes' duration, and then swept on eastward. The sea ran heavy and high; the boat plunged, creaking and straining, but breasted the waves still, though threatening destruction at any moment.

The man and woman had spread the sail with a depression in the center, and caught of the rain sufficient to relieve their insatiate thirst.

They had a life-preserver each, which fastened upon their persons, and prepared for a final encounter with the waves when the worst should come. The little bark drifted on, holding together beyond the utmost limits of their expectations.

"Look!" cried Mirette, with sudden sharpness. "Land, it is land!"

A long, low, dark line lay before them, and the boat drifted on toward it. Every energy was now devoted to keeping it afloat, and after what seemed an eternity, they were within plain sight of the shore.

The white-capped waves rolled high, but the absence of a continuous line left them nothing to apprehend from breakers. But now with safety in sight, the boat almost

ceased to advance, and settled speedily, despite their utmost efforts.

There were ears, which Mirette had tied together, and she had wrenches loose a spar after the destruction of the boat became a certainty. They cast these into the sea, and following, clung to them in the last desperate struggle for life. The wind rising again, gave token that the storm was not over. But before the rain broke down again they both had been washed ashore.

Their refuge proved to be an island which was little more than a sandbank. It was covered with a growth of rank, reed-like grass, but there was no other vegetation, which they accepted as proof that the island was at times quite submerged. There was no water, but for the immediate time they were supplied from the discharge of the clouds. Clams were washed up along the shore, which Mirette secured, and fed on voraciously. Alec rallied for a few hours, then sank into a profound sleep of utter exhaustion and awoke in a burning delirium.

The packet of papers inclosed in a proof wrapping which he had guarded so faithfully were exposed now to the hand of the despoiler.

Mirette stole them from his bosom without one pang of conscience, and secured them upon her own person.

"He may die now if he likes," she whispered, fiercely. "The sooner he dies, if any rescue is to reach here. I am almost tempted to consign him an offering to the spirits of the deep."

The whispered thought was only the weight of empty words, for the desolation of that barren shore would have proved intolerable but for the germ of life lingering in his unconscious form, still sufficient to impart a sense of companionship. She bestowed little care upon him, but kept watch of the horizon in hope of succor.

It came sooner than she had dared to hope. On the second day, a sail appearing like a tiny speck grew steadily more distinct as the vessel bore straight down upon the little island. She had no means of raising a signal to attract the attention of the crew, but, sighting land, a boat was sent ashore in the hope of obtaining water.

Mirette met them upon the beach. Alec lay far back amid the reeds, in a heavy apathetic sleep, from which she told herself he would never awake.

In answer to the inquiries of the sailors she satisfied them that there was no water upon the little island, and, when they went back to the ship, she accompanied them, with never a word of that other survivor of storm and wreck whose presence on that sandy shore they did not suspect.

CHAPTER II.

FLORIEN.

Miss DEBORAH GRAY, stiff, tall and gaunt, as she always appeared, had never seemed stiffer, taller, more gaunt and forbidding than she did one bright Spring morning as she stood in the shadow just beyond the flood of sunshine which streamed in over the bare white kitchen floor.

It seemed a studied principle of Miss De-

boration never to receive any thing from the joyous brightness which is like healthful elixir to more versatile natures, so she seemed always to be surrounded by an impalpable gray shadow, which detracted nothing from her sharp angles of form and feature, and lent no softening influence to her hard expression. She held an open letter in her hand. The visible lines in her forehead had deepened and closed in a corrugated knot of wrinkles, her thin lips were compressed, and her eyes of light gray grown colder—if that were possible—than their accustomed wont.

Her hand closed upon and crumpled the written sheet, which she thrust hastily behind her, as a young girl came, with a springy step, up the garden path, and flashed across the stream of yellow sunlight—herself an incarnation of a glorious brightness, which was all the more attractive because it was apparent as a promise quite as much as in reality. Just now there was an unusual flush on the round, sunbrowned cheeks, a sparkle of excitement glinting in her eyes, which were of the dark hazel which verges upon brown. She walked straight up to confront Miss Deborah with her bright young face mingling impetuosity with defiance, and her clear voice ringing with a sense of indignity put upon her.

"You needn't try to hide it from me, aunt Deborah," said she. "I know you have got a letter from abroad, though you are so anxious to hide the fact from me. You had another one a month ago, and never breathed of it. I want to know why you didn't deliver the message it contained?"

Deborah Gray stood stiff as a poker, still keeping the letter at her back, regarding the girl with a stern silence, which was meant to awe her into more submissive deportment. Whatever the customary effect of that unwavering gaze may have been, it failed signally in accomplishing its object now.

"You needn't try to stare me down, aunt Deb," she, with scornful accent. "I'll not be put down, I tell you. I'll find out what's in the letter you hold there as sure as I'm here, and you'll deliver what messages have been addressed to me, or I'll let it be known about the breach of faith you are guilty of. Shame on you, who profess to be a Christian. In my opinion you've been truly guilty of stealing as was little Jacky White, who was caught taking potatoes from our cellar last winter; you were severe enough on him, though it was proved actual hunger drove him to the deed. You have no such good excuse to account for your action."

"Florry! how dare you speak in that manner to me?" exclaimed Miss Gray. "Go to your room, and don't come down again until you are prepared to conduct yourself in a more exemplary manner."

"I will not go to my room, aunt Deb, and I will know the contents of that letter before I budge from this spot. Will you let me see it?"

Her tone was of command, not entreaty. Miss Gray looked grimly and sternly down

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at the rebellious girl, who neither flinched nor abated zeal in her declared purpose.

"Will you let me see it?" she demanded again.

"Really, Florry—" began her aunt, unwilling to yield the point. But, with a cat-like spring, Florry darted past her and clutched at the letter, but Deborah was too quick for her, holding it up far out of her reach.

Florry's little foot came down upon the floor with a resounding stamp.

"Give it to me, I say!"

"Florry!" The single exclamation was a marvel of frigid severity as it dropped from Miss Deb's lips. Her skinny hand descended upon the shoulder of the excited little fury, whose eyes were flaming with the dry, red blaze of anger. Florry wrenches herself away, and sinks sullenly into one of the kitchen chairs. She would not continue a struggle where inequally existed to her own unconquerable disadvantage.

"My ungrateful child! Is this the return for all my care of you? It is well that I carry the conviction of duty faithfully performed in my bosom, and the peace which is the unfailing reward for it. Your wicked passion can harm no one but yourself. How can you reconcile such outrageous conduct with the precepts I have endeavored to instill into your mind. 'Better is he who ruleth his spirit—'"

"Aunt Deb, you shall not quote Scripture to me. I know I'm a great sinner—you've told me so often enough—and I don't know that I care to be any thing else. If you sermonize, I shall go straight out of this door, and not come back until I have seen Judge Lessingham, and discover if there is not some means to force a regard of my rights."

"If you move a step you shall not know from my lips," cried aunt Deb, angrily. "You don't deserve to be told any thing, and you should know I had good enough reason to spare you the knowledge of that other letter. I should have told you all about them both before this time but for your inexcusable behavior. Now, tell me, how do you know that any message was sent to you?"

Florry hung her head and her cheeks tingled; then her neck straightened proudly, and her gaze was unabashed and fearless as ever.

"Mr. Walter Lynne brought it from the office and left it in passing," said she. "The envelope was one of those transparent white kind, and some of the writing showed quite plainly through it. The foreign post-mark attracted his eye, and without meaning it he read some fragmentary lines, but not enough to understand the import of a single sentence. One was—'Tell my little Florry—another—love my dear!' Oh! Aunt Deb, why have you never told me that papa remembers and loves me?"

The full lips grew tremulous, but the angry amazement depicted in her aunt's face kept Florry's resentful spirit still in the ascendant.

"Florry! have you been meeting that man?"

"Aunt Deborah, I have been meeting that man."

"After my warnings! after my commands! Oh, what a bitter, thankless task I undertook when I accepted you into my charge."

There was a malicious gleam in Florry's eyes, and without doubt at any other time she would have proved herself recalcitrant and tantalizing, but now her object in view was too serious to be hazarded for a trifle.

"You didn't give me time to say that it was purely by accident," she resumed. "I have obeyed you on that point if I never do on any other. You might know that or I would have understood your treachery before this time."

"I will not permit you to use such language in addressing me. You will be sorry for it and justify me when you come to know my motives. Here is the letter you were demanding just now to see."

Florry reached for it eagerly—a thin, rustling sheet written in a sloping feminine hand. Her hand fell as she saw that, and that the paper was edged with black. The color went out of her expressive face, leaving it awed and still.

"Is papa dead?" she asked, in a subdued tone.

"Yes, he's dead"—in a voice which was hard and bitter.

Florry looked at her with tearless, reproachful eyes.

"Can't you forgive him now that he is dead?" she asked.

"How could I pray 'forgive us our trespasses' if I had not forgiven him? I forgive, but I never forgot."

Self-deluding sophistry! Deborah Gray thought she meant just what she said, but she should have known that true forgiveness consists in forgetting the injury.

"Poor papa!" sighed the girl. "You never let me know much about him, aunt Deb, but I shall never forget how grand and noble he looked the one time I can remember seeing him. I never can believe that he was a deliberately-wicked man."

Miss Gray's lips compressed.

"You'll be apt to think him a deliberately-inconsiderate one, then?" Though not often delicate spoken, she paused to cast about for a mild term which might not shock the orphan's heart at the moment when all her tenderest associations should throb to remembrance. "That other letter was the announcement of his marriage with a French girl, he ran across out there in Sydney. The message he sent you was just this—'Tell my little Florry that I hope she may sometime learn to love my dear wife in the place of the mother she never knew.' He spoke, but indefinitely, of coming home, and I thought there was no occasion for you to know yet. Think of a brazen, Frenchy thing, after my sister Winnifred!"

That last expression gave Florry an insight of the true impulse which had prompted her aunt to withhold the news.

Her sister, Winnifred, had been her idol.

The two had been alone in the world, and all in all to each other until Winnifred married against the elder sister's will. Hubert Redesdale had just graduated, was reckless, and impulsive as the wildest college student, and Deborah Gray never paused to distinguish gradations between total moral depravity and youthful follies.

The marriage did not prove a happy one. The couple were ill-assorted as a couple well could be, and one of the violent disagreements which came to be a part of their daily life ended in the young wife returning to her sister's home, which Redesdale made no effort to induce her to leave again.

In reality he had been harshly judged. Winnifred was a selfish doll of a woman who had no sympathy in accordance with

him, and was always setting her narrow views against his opinions and wishes. She died of a pulmonary disease when Florry was in her babyhood, but her sister Deborah accused Hubert Redesdale of blighting her life and breaking her heart.

"That letter is from your father's new wife," continued Miss Gray, in her hard, dry voice. "She says they had made all their arrangements for a return to the States, but a week before the vessel was to sail he was taken with yellow fever and died in three days time. She intended to come on all the same, so we may look for her now at any time. Read the letter and see what you think of the prospect."

Thus reminded, Florry perused the insipive—formal and cleverly worded, but dictatorial in style, and where grief was expressed, diffuse to insincerity. One paragraph the girl fingered over.

"My husband left a considerable fortune which he accumulated during the dozen years he remained in Australia. The bulk of it was conveyed sometime before our marriage to a responsible lawyer. Your house, and his will, drawn up and witnessed here, were forwarded at the same time to the keeping of the head of the firm. It leaves that entire portion to his daughter Florien, but he made liberal provision for me from later accumulations."

The business-like details seemed out of place in this first announcement of her grief, written so soon after her bereavement. It went on to state that the girl should be sent to some suitable school, as the writer had been led to believe her education was not of a kind to suit the position the house would hereafter occupy. Florry's wayward heart rebelled. What right had this stranger, a woman whom she had never seen, whom she felt intuitively she could neither love nor trust, to assert control over her?

"I'll not be disposed of in any such way," she declared, indignantly.

"She will be your personal guardian until you are of age," said Miss Deborah, grimly. "She can do as she likes with you."

"She shall let me alone to do as I like, or she'll find her guardianship anything but a pleasant undertaking," declared fiery Florry.

Miss Deborah opened her lips as if to utter a reproof, but closed them again without having spoken. For once Florry's waywardness received no check since it was directed against a cause which was a bitter cross to her spinster aunt.

The girl went slowly out of the wide kitchen, which was a model of cleanly neatness, and climbed the steps leading to her attic room. There were a couple of dormer windows set in the sloping roof; the room was wide and low, with a strip of bright rag-carpet covering the center of the floor. At the sides it was bare but scoured daubily white. There was a bed, a chair, and a rickety washstand; a little worn trunk; and a little round mirror hung upon the wall. A few dresses hung upon pegs in one corner, and there was a miscellaneous pile of pamphlets, books and papers, on a shelf.

Florry sat upon the worn little trunk, resting her chin upon her hand, thinking sadly of the father, evidences of whose love or care she had never experienced. There seemed a weight upon her heart, a vague, dull pain, unlike a grief brought forcibly home to her by the death of one she had known familiarly. A little moisture dimmed her eyes, but, unlike those of many girls, Florry was seldom moved to tears. Her capacity for joy or suffering was great, but a deep emotion always left her subdued and silent.

Growing up as she had done beneath Miss Deborah's shadow, she had not failed to notice her bitter enmity toward Hubert Redesdale, though the spinster always seemed so unusually so upon this very subject. It may have been this very subject which enlisted Florry in warm sympathy on her father's side; certainly it was through no clearer understanding of the truth than she gathered from studying the pretty simpering face which hung over the mantel in Miss Deborah's room. Florry never looked at the pictured face without being glad that she in no way resembled it.

Hours passed while she sat there thinking mournfully of her father's fate, and realizing something of what she had lost through never knowing him. But Florry's nature was one of those strange compounds which will leap at once from one extreme of feeling to the very opposite; so now she flushed again with indignant anger as she gathered together her precious letters and tied them securely with a scarlet ribbon which had been twined in her short brown locks.

"How dare aunt Deb preach duty or gratitude to me?" she asked herself, passionately. "I'm sure I don't owe her much for her care of me, nor for her example of honesty, whatever her precepts may have been. She has always treated me as though I were a baby, with neither judgment nor common sense, but I'll not be led blindfold by her or any one hereafter. If that woman dares attempt to control me against my will, I'll find so many ways to torment her that she'll be glad to let me take my own course, if it does lead me down to destruction, as aunt Deb will be apt to declare."

So absorbed was she that she did not hear a step across the sands, which lay bare and dry now. A young man taking a short cut by the bluff from the hotel, a mile up the shore, had espied her perched there in the cranny amid the cliffs. He took a nonchalant, leisurely survey of the little figure swayed by the force of her tempestuous feelings, and with a sweep of his eye assured himself that he had no cause to fear the intrusion of a third party. Then with a few swift strides he cleared the space between them, and she started up with a wavering of the color in the bright cheeks as she found him suddenly at her side.

"What am I to infer from that Lucrezia Borgia look I surprised upon your face?" he asked, flippantly. "One would think you meditated dire revenge upon your worst enemy."

"Not so bad as that, Mr. Lynne. I am only studying by what means I can circumvent my enemy."

Some shade differing from her usual frank outspokenness impressed him, and he asked with quick concern:

"What is the matter, Florry? Has anything occurred to distress you?"

His tender tone penetrated to the girl's sore heart. The poor child had experienced little enough of delicate treatment since she could first remember, and beneath her impulsive waywardness she carried a high-strung, sensitive organization that found relief now in his sympathetic presence. He thought that she had never looked so pretty as at that moment, with the grievous shade clouding her face, her fresh lips apart and quivering, and her hazel eyes grown deep and dark with the softening force of her emotion. Walter Lynne was fastidious to the last degree on some points, and though neither a strong nor a pure-minded man, he had placed his standard of womanhood on a pedestal which he was not blind enough to believe that Florry had reached, but he had sufficient foresight to discern that she would attain it in the future, when the capricious waywardness of the girl should merge into the earnest experience of the woman.

Florry, come back!" cried her aunt.

But Florry, never heedling, perhaps not hearing, sped straight on until the flutter of her light garments was shut from sight by the trees which fringed the lane.

CHAPTER III.

AT MIDNIGHT.

FLORRY neither paused nor swerved aside from a straight course until she rushed across the strip of level sandy beach on that Jersey shore, and, sure of foot, skimmed over the slippery rocks which the outgoing tide left bare, while the crevices between were channels that would not be drained for a half-hour yet.

By the roundabout course of the rocks she reached the bluffs a quarter of a mile away from the strip of even beach. She hung herself over a cranny where an overhanging rock screened her from the

chance of observation from above, and let the misses she had clutched so tightly all the way shower down in an irregular heap at her side, while her grieved and angered heart swelled in painful throbs which shook her frame like suppressed sobbing. She clenched her hands and set her teeth together until she had mastered the passion assailing her.

"Oh, papa! poor, poor papa!" she cried, letting her head drop into the support of her clasped hands; and, as though a little of her burden had escaped in that regretful cry, she composed herself to examine the letters, the first of which had lain in wait for her for twelve long years.

Long, loving letters they were,

which gave her an insight into the strong unrest, the unsatisfied craving, which had made her father a voluntary exile from his home and friends. He had never forgotten her, as stern aunt Deb had permitted her to think. Her eyes grew soft and humid with unshed tears of tenderness as she observed the date of each yearly letter, and knew they had been intended to reach her on her birthdays. Some of the later ones seemed to breathe a reproach that she never responded to his messages of affection, but the last one of all touched her as none of the others had done. A paragraph ran:

"And now, my daughter, I have found a sense of restful peace and a new interest in life which I never expected to hold. I have been a lonely man, trying to drown my discontent in constant employment, or when that failed, throwing myself heart and soul into some adventurous mission which can always be found in a good cause in this wild Australia. In an expedition of this kind, a few months ago, we were attacked by bush-rangers, and only succeeded in beating them off after a tough struggle and the loss of half our number. I was taken unresistingly and sold, with others in the same plight, and carried back to Sydney. One of the crew was a French companion named Draveau, with whom I had a standing acquaintance, and it was in endeavoring to rescue him I received my severest wound. At the solicitation of his sister, who learned the facts, I was conveyed directly to the residence he had occupied, and the grateful, noble woman nursed me back to strength and health against odds which seemed at first insurmountable. I can not hope to impress you, my daughter, with any clear understanding of the man's character, or to let you know the reason for his sudden disappearance, which was never explained to me. I have been a good man, but I have been a bad man, and I will be a happier man than in all my life yet when she becomes my wife, as she has promised to do. Can I hope that my little girl will be glad for her father's sake, until I can bring my two loved ones together, as I hope to do some day? I have told Mirette of the daughter I have not seen for twelve long years, and she is prepared to receive you with open arms and heart."

There was much more in the same strain; and Florry, loyally her father's memory the more for these confidences he had so openly given her, felt herself grow bitterly indignant at the woman who had written that cold, calculating letter immediately after his death.

"He loved her so," she thought, "but before the grave closed over him she was counting the advantages her position as his widow would afford her. Oh, how vilely she must have deceived him! He thought her an angel, but I know she must be the arch-hypocrite a woman may become to have so imposed upon him. Who knows but his death was mercifully sent to save him from the shock of knowing her in her true light?"

Hours passed while she sat there thinking mournfully of her father's fate, and realizing something of what she had lost through never knowing him. But Florry's nature was one of those strange compounds which will leap at once from one extreme of feeling to the very opposite; so now she flushed again with indignant anger as she gathered together her precious letters and tied them securely with a scarlet ribbon which had been twined in her short brown locks.

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Florry, come back!" cried her aunt.

But Florry, never heedling, perhaps not hearing, sped straight on until the flutter of her light garments was shut from sight by the trees which fringed the lane.

Now she was little more than a willful child whose hoydenish proclivities shocked while they amused him. But her untrammeled grace, and bright, youthful beauty, had a fascination for him which was lacking in the matured charms of more than one eligible belle who would have willingly bestowed her fair hand for the asking.

"Walter, oh, Walter! Papa is dead, poor papa!" And see all these letters, which seem now almost like revelations from him in heaven, are the proof that he was noble and brave and tender in his thoughts of me always. I would have been so proud and fond of him, and now he is gone without even knowing how I could have loved him."

"Through no fault of yours, Florry; he held you aloof from him all your life."

"But he remembered me. He wrote to me every year, and aunt Deb kept back his letters. I'll never forgive her—I never shall; for if I had only known him as I do now, and let him feel how his daughter could have worshiped him, he might never have cared for any one else. But now his wife is to come here, and shows already that she means to rule me if she can."

"His wife?"

"He was married, and meant to come back here to make his home. Oh, I shall hate her, I know."

"I hope not—for your own sake" he replied, with a smile at her vehemence.

"But I shall. You may read papa's letters, Walter, and I will tell you what she wrote; and then see if you can make any thing of

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THE GUILELESS HEART.

BY GERALD SILVEY.

The blush upon thy cheek is charming,
Fair as morn's first blushing light;
And thy eyes are glowing,
Than cornelian skies are bright.

But, cheeks soft glow, and eyes wild beaming,
Never were my soul's delight.

Nay! 'twas not thy angelic beauty,
That first won my loving heart?

Not thy charms, which beamed divinely,

Bade my sleeping passions start;

For the pleasure then that thrilled me,

No outward beauty could impart.

Why is it, then, gentle presence,

With lasting grace, I see no beauty?

What is it Love's radiant glories?

Tends the flame with angel art?

Harken, maiden, I will tell you:

Thy trusting, guileless heart!

The Rock Rider:

THE SPIRIT OF THE SIERRA.

TALE OF THE THREE PARKS.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER.

AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAJAH," "THE KNIGHT OF THE RUBIES," "DOUBLE-DEATH," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII. THE FLAG OF TRUE.

NIGHT brooded over the valley of the South Park, and all the dark greenward was alive with twinkling watch-fires, around which the warriors of three great tribes, the Comanches, the Apaches and the Cheyennes, were standing, sitting and lying.

At the mouth of the pass, clustered behind the white tents of their wagons, the remnant of the soldiers were sullenly gathered, cheerless and fireless, without a drop of water in camp, save what remained in their canteens from the morning's filling, a scanty supply at best.

The Indians seemed to have settled down to a regular siege, every avenue of escape being closed up by their grim circle of fires, but no further attacks being made. The warriors had suffered too heavily for their rash charges to be disposed to repeat them yet.

The soldiers, on the other hand, were silent and dispirited. All their animals had been killed or stampeded, and they had no resources but to defend themselves behind the corral of wagons till help arrived, if ever help came.

In the midst of the corral a group of officers was gathered, talking over the prospect before them in low tones.

"We have plenty of ammunition, major," said one, in reply to a question from a gray-headed officer, who seemed to be the commander, "but the men to use it are not so plentiful. We have too many recruits, and half of them are down sick or wounded since this morning. That Cochise must have had spies out who knew all our weakness, or the devils would never have dared to attack such a force as we have."

"How many men can you report for duty, then?" asked the major, a little crossly. "Don't theorize about Cochise, but tell me how many men I can depend on to cut through their line?"

"Not more than seventy, sir, and half of them are green hands."

"Green or not we must make the attempt at daybreak," said Major Morris, firmly. "If we had horses or water I would send to Denver for help. As it is, we must cut our way through and spike the guns, so that the Indians can't use them."

"Allow me to suggest a better method, major," said another officer. "We have proved that the Indians dare not attack us while we stick together. Our fire is too heavy. Why not take the guns with us, and move down to one of those pools to-night? The men are choking with thirst and desperate. We have nothing left to lose, and every thing to gain. The moral effect on the Indians must be incalculable, if we move boldly and surprise them. They think we are disheartened at the death of the ladies—"

"Hush, Taylor, hush! don't mention them," said the major, shuddering. "It's a fearful disgrace to five companies of United States troops that we should have let those devils carry off the General's wife and daughters, without being able to fire a shot to save them. It has near broken my heart, and I shall demand a court-martial and resign if I ever get out of this scrape alive."

"Crack! went a rifle from under the wheel of a wagon, the place where the sentries were posted, and all the officers were on the alert in moment, while the men jumped upon all sides from where they lay dozing. "Who fired that shot?" demanded the major, sternly, as every thing still remained quiet outside.

The Indians did not appear to have noticed it.

"I fired, sir," responded a voice from under the wagon. "There's three Injuns a-comin' this way a-horseback, and I've stopped 'em."

"Don't fire again till I tell you," said the major. "I want to see them."

He went down between the wagons, and peered out. The forms of three horsemen were distinctly visible, standing out black against the firelight; and the center one bore a square white flag on his lance.

"A flag of truce, by Heavens!" exclaimed the major. "We must not be the first to disgrace it, gentlemen. Let us hear what they have to say. Boys, keep your eyes skinned all round. This may be only an Indian trick after all. I am going to hear their message."

Unfolding his white handkerchief, and displaying it for a counter-flag, the major advanced from the shelter of the wagons a few paces, when he halted and signaled the others to advance.

A number of Indians could be now seen standing by the fires, watching the advance of their envoys with apparent interest, and the fires, brightly blazing all round, made it a matter of difficulty for any one to cross the open ground without being seen.

At thirty paces distant one of the Indian envoys stuck his flag into the ground, dismounted, and advanced to meet the major.

He proved to be a magnificent chief, with scarlet plumes in his hair, dressed in the extreme of Indian dandyism, and heavily armed—no other than our friend, Red Lightning, with his left shoulder freshly bandaged from the wound of Buford's sword.

He executed a smart military salute to the major, for Red Lightning was proud of his proficiency in white customs, and then observed:

"How do, white chief?"

"Badly," said the major, sternly. Being

an old army officer, he knew all the prominent chiefs by sight, and recognized the other. "Very badly, Red Lightning. The Great Father has treated you and Cochise well. What are you doing here to-day, then, killing his children? I myself saw rifles and powder issued to you not six weeks ago, and now you use them on us. Where is Cochise, the Apache chief? He is with you here, too."

"Cochise is here," said a deep voice; and one of the Indians dismounted and came forward.

Like Red Lightning, though only of medium stature, his chest was enormous, and he seemed to be possessed of unbounded strength. The expression of his face was that of ferocious, brutal insolence, which he cared not to conceal; and his weapons were more numerous, if possible, than those of Red Lightning. Such was the infamous Apache chief, Cochise, noted for more than a hundred cold-blooded murders.

"What does the white chief want with Cochise?" he demanded, sneeringly. "Men seldom call him twice."

"What do you mean, Cochise, by attacking us in this manner?" asked the officer, putting a bold face on matters to deceive the Indian. "Are you not ashamed to break your treaties? You will get no more rifles and blankets from the Great Father, when he hears of this."

"Bah! Squaws talk. Men kill," said Cochise, roughly. "Much powder, plenty rifle, in train. Cochise take nuff for three, seven year. Go on war-path. Den make peace with Great Father when tired and hungry. Good."

The cool audacity of the savage took the other aback for a moment, but Red Lightning addressed the third Indian in the rear, saying:

"Keche-ah-que-kono, chief of the Cheyennes, come forward and tell the white chief what we want."

The third Indian turned his horse loose and came forward, a gray-headed chief, of dignified mien, who spoke English pretty well. He saluted the major as politely as Red Lightning had done, and the officer observed:

"I little thought to see you here, too, Keche. You'll be sorry for it."

"May be not be sorry, major," said Keche, quietly. "We got you here so you never get out, and we got two little white squaws, too, that belong to the General. What you say to dat, major?"

"Gracious God, Keche! Are they yet alive?" demanded the major, excitedly. "We thought surely they were all scalped when you took them."

"One was, major," said Keche, coolly. "I got up in time to git two odders. We had 'em safe, and now we want to trade 'em!"

"Thank God, Keche, you're not as bad as dierest," said the major, fervently. "What do you want for them, man? I'll give you each a barrel of powder when you come to the fort, and fifty blankets—"

"No go," interrupted Cochise, coarsely. "No go. White chief much mean; not worth a curse."

What little English Cochise understood, will be perceived, had not been learned on Fifth avenue.

Major Morris colored deeply with vexation at the chief's insolence, but he contained himself, as many another gallant officer has been forced to in a similarly helpless position.

"Keche," he said to the Cheyenne, "tell me then how much you want to restore General Davis' daughters back to my care unharmed?"

Keche-ah-que-kono smiled in a benevolent manner. His face bore a strong resemblance to that of the great Henry Ward Beecher in his saintliest mood, as the Cheyenne chief softly observed:

"White Father very rich. Got plenty guns, plenty powder, plenty wagons. White chief give up all his guns and wagons. Then Injuns give back the two white girls."

"What! Give up the very train I was ordered to escort to Fort Steedman?" said the major, excitedly. "Keche, you must think I'm a coward to make such a proposal to me. Give up my train indeed!"

"Dat not all," said Keche, quietly. "You got to leave train anyhow. We have him safe to-morrow. We want all the guns your men have got, big gun, little gun and powder. You pile your arms. We give up squaws, and take you back where come from."

"In fact," said the major, angrily, "you ask an unconditional surrender of all my forces. Well, sir, you won't get it. I could not face my General again, if I ever did such thing. You can go back, sir. If I tell my men your proposition they'll fire on you now."

"Maybe so they not fire," said the Cheyenne, coolly. "You get shot yourself first, major. We go back. You think better of me to-morrow morning. We bring little squaws down to see you. If so, you give up all, send you back. If not, you what happen to 'um before your eyes."

Without another word the Cheyenne chief turned on his heel and stalked to his horse. Cochise laughed brutally, and observed:

"Little white squaw nice. Warriors like 'um. Ugh!"

Then he too stalked away, and Red Lightning said, very earnestly:

"You do what Keche say, major. We like white chief, but must have big guns to fight soldiers. Good-night."

He saluted very politely, and turned away. Major Morris returned to his men. Cochise laughed brutally, and observed:

"Little white squaw nice. Warriors like 'um. Ugh!"

Then he too stalked away, and Red Lightning said, very earnestly:

"You do what Keche say, major. We like white chief, but must have big guns to fight soldiers. Good-night."

He saluted very politely, and turned away. Major Morris returned to his men in dire perplexity.

The Indians had put him in a fearful dilemma between the duty of a soldier and the feelings of a gentleman, for he had not known to that moment that the two girls were alive under his escort.

On his return, he at once called his officers together, and stated to them the Indian proposition and its fearful alternative.

It was midnight when they reached the gorge, and the sight of the red fire puzzled them all, for every thing round was deathly still.

Yakop went trotting quietly up toward the cavern, and the three friends slowly followed, keeping a cautious look-out ahead of them, with rifles poised, and cocked.

Nothing occurred to disturb them till they were near the entrance of the outer cavern, when Yakop suddenly stopped, snarling, and at the same moment a dark figure leaped up from the side of the ravine, yelling out:

"Golly sakes alive! Wurra dat! Git out of dis, you mean tiffs!"

Without the slightest warning Somers was prostrated to the earth, as if struck by a cannon-ball, by the brawny fist of Cato, which knocked him senseless before he could utter a sound.

Then came the flash of a rifle, as Buford,

followed him, and always received a kind word from his master.

Before they had gone far up the ravine, the rocks shut out the view of the fires, and then the German spoke to the dog:

"Vat for you go disser vay, Yakop? Is de Injuns all gone?"

"Wuff!" answered Yakop, as plainly as if he said, "Yes."

"But vat shall ye do mit ourselves up here, Yakop? Dere is noptoy vat life hier, hein?"

Again Yakop gave a short "wuff."

"Vat you say to das hund, poy?" asked Carl, admiringly. "He say sompote life hier, und ein freund, too. You see Yakop he be right before ve gets troo."

"But how can we be certain that we don't get caught in the mountains?" asked Somers, anxiously. "Your dog's a wonderful dog, Carl, but he can't know the way out, when he's never been here before."

"I don't got no fears 'bout Yakop," said Carl, confidently. "Yakop he got more sense dan all of us put togeder. You see, mein Herrn. He tell me, plain as hund can speak, dat dere is vite man up diess berg. I goes dere. You staytseh pheint, de Injuns catches you."

"We had better follow the dog, Jack," said Buford, gravely. "Remember that his scent enables him to distinguish between people. He has probably struck the trail of some white hunter. You know there are some in the mountains, and the dog may be right. We can't be much worse off than in that valley, full of Indians as it is, with every pass occupied. I vote to follow the dog."

Here Yakop, who had been listening to the conversation as if he understood every word, leaped up on the speaker, wagging his tail; and then went off up the pass, gamboling and frisking, frequently looking back to see if he was followed.

The three friends took up their line of march after the dog in silence, and after awhile mounted their horses for greater convenience. The ravine became narrower and steeper, till it climbed a species of stage in the mountain side, when it ran on, nearly level, for some distance, ending in three diverging canyons, each as black as ink. Into the right hand one of these Yakop ran without hesitation, and the horsemen followed.

The floor of the canyon was smooth, and covered with sand and gravel, which shone white through the darkness and made the track following so much the easier.

At last, however, their progress was suddenly cut short by a perpendicular wall of rock, which seemed to forbid further advance; and Somers fretfully exclaimed:

"I knew how it would be, following that dog."

Carl Brinkerhoff dismounted and looked round.

Yakop had disappeared.

The German called him in a low voice

several times, and soon they heard the eager panting of the little creature, coming up to him.

"You keeps back now, or I shoots you! Thousand teufels! Vat sort of beepies is dis, dat lies hier? I dinks dey must pe crazy!"

"Brinkerhoff, is it thou?" cried the familiar voice of Belcourt.

"Stay l' said Belcourt, suddenly: "I have an idea. If we all go, we are too many for craft, too few for strength. I, monsieur, am a conjuror, and you seem to be a person of influence among the Indians. I propose that we go together, and try to obtain these girls by artifice. We have not far to carry them, only to the camp of their friends, who have beaten off the Indians, but lost their horses. Well then, let one of us, the best mounted, ride through the passes and go to Denver for help. No doubt monsieur here will show us the way to do that. They will send troops and horses, we shall beat off the Indians, save the ladies, and all be happy. What do you say to that, my friends?"

"The plan is good," was the universal response.

Whether it was feasible, the next day would decide.

(To be continued.—Commenced in No. 145.)

in the sudden start, let off his gun accidentally; and before Carl Brinkerhoff could collect his senses, he received a blow on the back of the head that sent him headlong to the earth, while Buford was pinned as if in the grasp of a vice, and Cato's knee struck him in the back like the blow of a trip-hammer. All the breath was knocked out of his body as he came flat down on his back on the hard rock.

Like an angry lion the herculean black leaped upon Carl Brinkerhoff, who had staggered up, confused, and before, the German could point his rifle. Cato had clasped him in his arms, and was bearing him down.

Then Carl roused all his strength, which was also tremendous; and white and black rolled over and over on the ground, tugging and straining

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AT LAST!

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROB;

or,

The Vigilantes of California,

THE GREAT SEQUEL TO OVERLAND KIT,

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

Author of the "Wolf Demon," etc., we have the pleasure to announce, is now in the hands of the artist for illustration. Mr. Aiken's many admirers, we are sure, will be happy to hear this good news.

Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—It is provoking to see our matter widely copied by the press and the common civility of credit denied to us, but it is worse when not only is credit denied but the very author's name is omitted—pains absolutely being taken to strike out the authorship! This is not only robbery but a mean robbery at that. An editor who not only defrauds the paper of its credit but also deliberately suppresses the author's name, is equally a trade nuisance and a rogue. Many of Joe Jo's unique contributions come back to us with not the slightest indication of their parentage. If we could only discover who first drops the author's name we would prosecute the offender, as he deserves. Every line in our paper being copyrighted, we shall permit no abuse of the privilege which we extend to other papers to copy from our columns. Where proper credit is given we cheerfully consent to the reproduction of our short stories, essays, poems and humorous matter, but peremptorily forbid such reprinting where the credit is suppressed.

A correspondent likes the SATURDAY JOURNAL because it always gives to the American author a "fair show," and he adds: "Most of our magazines and many of our weekly papers prefer either to copy English stories without pay, or to pay, in a few instances, four or five times the amount, for mere advance sheets, more than they would think of paying for the best original romance by a home author;" and he declares that it is "a well-known fact that American authors are disappearing." All this is only too true. So long as there is no international copyright to protect both the author and publisher in his rights and property, there will be no encouragement to authorship, as a profession, in this country. To popular weekly papers alone can our authors look for any thing like encouragement and proper compensation. And yet, it is a habit of certain newspaper hacks to sneer at these popular papers! Truly there is no accounting for some men's ideas. Any one of our three or four leading popular weeklies, we confidently assert, pay American authors more money, in one year, than all our monthly magazines combined pay in five years.

—Some author has beautifully said: "Pleasant dreams are pretty pebbles in the brook of sleep; and the dim reminiscences we have of them are the ripples made on the surface of consciousness." The mind filled with sweet content is sure to have pleasant dreams. It is the uneasy soul that dreams of "goblins damned." Some live out lives that seem like dreams. Whittier's life has been one of such. Though unmarried, and always an invalid, yet his tender, loving nature makes his paths of peace, and when he dies it will be to lie down in a long, sweet dream. Oh, if men and women were only all as pure and true to the right, what a dream of bliss would this life be!

The mistakes of printers, proof-readers and reporters sometimes produce strange results. It is related that Disraeli, in closing a powerful address in support of a Parliamentary measure, once said: "We have burned our boats, we have destroyed our bridges, and do not intend to recross the river!" Imagine the horror of the distinguished Prime Minister when he discovered that a reporter had made him say: "We have burned our boots and destroyed our breeches, and can't re-cross the river!" After this, why need a correspondent, H. L. T., complain, because a certain proof-reader made the word *need* to read *rude*? She said some men have need to be known, etc., and the printer said, "Some men have mud to be known." The fault doubtless was in her MS. Moral: Be sure to write plainly.

—Bill Arp, a "genius" of the Artemus Ward School, starts a paper, and thus salutes: "Gentle reader, dost thou love slander and skandal, and duels and snake-bites, and such like? Dost thou sometimes glory in human misery? If yea, we will feed you on some sweet morsels. Art thou sick, or deceased, or hiptoshorn, or bellowsed, or colicky? Look over our patent medicines, and pay your money and take your choice. We intend to caper and cater for the publick. The publick is a menagerie, and the different beasts must be fed on different food."

This seems humorous, but we fear it is a fact that many papers, nowadays, seriously adopt the idea that the public is a menagerie. Only on this supposition can we account for a great deal that is beastly in American journalism. A great many of our dailies so "caper and cater for the publick" that they are Bill Arp's ideal. They are not the safest reading a man can introduce into his house for the Young Folks to peruse and talk over. That there is a morbid desire among certain minds for the feast of scandal and criminal revelations every editor well knows; but, only the most pressing necessity of "giving the news" can excuse the use of matter essentially vitiating. If the dailies were the only reading that families had, what a miserable thing it would be! The Weekly paper, proceeding upon the idea

that the public is neither a menagerie nor a set of ghouls, but, on the contrary, that the majority of readers are both intelligent and circumspect, caters to society and homes and individuals to edify, amuse and comfort, and hence to the Weekly must the public look for its relief from the influence of the mere newspaper.

Submerged Continent.—In two previous articles we have referred to various evidences of a race, coexistent with the Mammoth, who made this continent an abiding-place, and, after a long career of evident prosperity, passed utterly away. The query arises—who were they?

A favorite theory, long urged, is that the lost tribes of Israel must have come hither; and certain archaeologists find in the ruins of Central America, "confirmation strong" of their Egyptian origin. But these same wise men are quite nonplussed over the ancient Peruvian civilization, architecture and arts, which were *sui generis* that the most eager friend of the Lost Tribes can not reconcile them with any thing so recent as the Pharaohs Egyptian civilization.

Latterly it has become a conceded proposition that the primitive or pristine race, whose traces exist in numerous places, were either an indigenous race, whose origin, like the origin of man, is lost in the mists of a far antiquity, or else that the race came direct from Eastern Asia by a highway now wholly lost to us.

This latter idea seems the most acceptable, although we see no reason why the idea of a wholly indigenous people—with a progress developed into a purely local civilization—should not be acceptable. If the race came from the ancient center of Man's supposed origin, then there must be indubitable evidences of that common origin. These antiquarians think they find in words that are alike, in all languages—in common ideas of the Deity and future life—in a repetition of architectural forms etc.; but, so few and faint are these resemblances that the argument drawn from them is neither strong nor logical.

There is, however, a better argument in the legends of the lost continent which have come down to us from ancient times. Thus Plato sent down to posterity a tradition of his day that a great continent which occupied the place now covered by the Atlantic Ocean suddenly sank down out of sight. He further says it was an island called Atlantis. On it were kingdoms and organized governments, wealth, arts and civilization, instantly lost to human sight.

It is now the opinion of the leading geologists—that most advanced in science—that the American continent appeared when the Atlantic waters rushed into the enormous cavity or depression on the earth's surface now filled by salt water. The Rocky Mountains were then the rough bottom of an ocean which rose with marine plants, shells and other products of an aquatic origin, that are found abundantly strewn there, and, in fact, all over North and South America. Remnants of Atlantis, the submerged continent, are believed by some scientists to be recognized in the Adirondacks, the White Mountains of Maine, and a few other outcroppings belonging to the outer boundaries of that deluged and forever lost country. There is no knowing what astounding discoveries may yet be made in coming ages corroborative of Plato's narration.

But, there is even more probability that a direct connecting link between this continent and Eastern Asia existed, at no very remote age, just north of what is now the track of the steamers' usual route from San Francisco to Japan. We have not the slightest doubt that sea explorations already ordered by our Government, will find a table-land, or plateau, to exist, between latitude 45°-55° north, whose nearness to the present water surface will prove that the lands of the Eastern and Western continents were once interlocked and continuous—divided only by a great river which brought down the waters from the North. Indeed, the chain of islands now stretching from Alaska to Siberia are the stepping-stones of this lost highway, by which the people of Eastern Asia can, even yet, come readily to this country.

A PLEA FOR THE WRONG DOER.

SAILING down a certain harbor on a lovely autumn afternoon, the party with whom I was traveling and myself were enjoying ourselves to our hearts' content. The conversation touched upon numerous topics, one of which was, that no one did a good and kind action for the mere sake of doing it.

It was not long ere we had an answer to the affirmative, in the most practical way. We were passing one of the jails, and, working on the grounds, we saw a youth clad in the well-known prison-garb. As we drew near the place, I noticed a lad, one of the deck hands, wave his hat at the prisoner.

Now I was extremely anxious to know what that was all for, and the first chance I got I addressed the lad on the subject. I asked him if it was his brother that he waved his hat to. His answer was that he didn't know who it was, and that the real motive for doing as he did was just this:

"It will make the poor fellow think there is some one that cares for him, and if such a little act as that will make his heart happy, why shouldn't I do it?"

And that is exactly what I have asked myself a hundred times since. Why don't we strive to make the hearts of others happy and not miserable? Is it not far better to drop words of comfort into the cup of our friends, than to be continually embittering the draught? If a human being goes astray and is condemned to suffer imprisonment for it, is that any reason we should shut him out from our hearts entirely, as if he were all bad, and had not one redeeming quality left?

Many are now walking amongst us whom we do not take by the hand and make friends of, but are far more deserving of punishment than some who are confined within the walls of a jail. The only difference between them is just this: one got caught, and the other has escaped his just deserts.

But don't, my dear, good sister, drive out the poor prisoner from your thoughts entirely. Remember he was once as innocent and pure as you, and perhaps a prayer, a smile, a good word may serve to make his life less hard to bear.

Did you know we have the power of keeping these prisoners *out* of jail? We have.

We can perform many a kindly deed that is scarcely hinted at. In fact, many people seem to think that it is no matter if any one is as ignorant as a Fejee, they are perfectly well qualified to marry and rear children.

And so, year after year, the children who ought to be playing with dolls and tops, are

if others had been willing to provide her with the food and raiment which she had not? Her crime must lie at some one else's door than her own, and it is a shame to think that such can be the case.

It is a hard thing to obtain the release of a criminal, and if any act or work of ours can keep others from crime, we are criminally culpable to refrain from the duty.

Make hearts happy; lighten the loads of the overburdened; open the windows of your heart and let a bit of its sunshine into some poor fellow-being's existence. Win the evil doer back by kindness. Life was not given to you to make only yourselves happy, regardless of others; it was given to you to be useful, and to "do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

What if you do gain nothing for it? Must every action be done for the reward it will bring?

Supposing you were tempted and fell, taken away from your friends and the bright, busy world—wouldn't you want some one to think of you enough to wake his hat as he passed by?

It is time we threw away our selfish habits and made the right use of the powers God has given us. Don't tread the wrong under foot because he hasn't had as much courage to resist temptation as you; try to bring him to his feet again and make his heart happy, is the earnest, solemn prayer of

EVE LAWLESS.

THE NEED OF REFORM.

ONWARD the march of progress is tending, but there are some nooks in the very heart of civilized communities that have escaped the reform rush, and remain to the present enlightened day in ignorance of the brilliant advantages they fail to enjoy.

It's a deplorable state of affairs to contemplate, people at large are so wise in their generation they rather welcome these reminders of primitive ages without reflecting upon the sin of remissness of which they are guilty in permitting ignorance to go without the revolution of enlightenment. That old saw, "Where ignorance is bliss," etc., is accountable for any number of the *gaucheries* committed in a slow, confused following of that same progressive march.

"What is to be will be," and some things, like Irishmen's shanties, are inevitable. Some people on this breezy, whirling, whirligig world of ours are characterized by such slow, heavy stupidity that it is hard to tell where the animal nature ceases to exist and the finer elements struggle into feeble life. They are not to be blamed for it, I suppose. A man can't be brilliant and witty and refined at will any more than he can overcome the natural resistance to perpetual motion. That's no reason why they should live like savages, however.

There is a country where the natives born and bred follow implicitly in the footsteps of their fathers, where people split the day in half with rigid impartiality, where they go to bed at dusk and snore through twelve hours of undisturbed somnolency, where they persist in eating three cooked meals per diem, winter and summer, working or idling, invariably preferring boiled pork and cabbages, baked pork and beans, or fried pork and potatoes, in endless rotation. Pork-bal! The mention of it calls up a nightmare specter since the day I chanced across such a primitive spot as I wrote of—the horrifying remembrance of a hairbreadth escape from the assault of a thin long snout, a curving, bristling back, a succession of terrifying, ominous noises, two little vicious, fery eyes under flapping ear-fans, and insult added to injury offered through the brute's antagonistic propensities by its owner's calm remark:

"Not afraid of our pet porker neow, be you? Why, sha newo—" without ever mingling a grain of comfort or assurance with the contemptuous intonation. Where's the folly of being wise applied to people like that, I ask?

Somebody with more leisure on his hands than ingenuity to usefully dispose of it has reckoned the difference gained by rising two hours earlier than the average time mornings, and tacked it in so many years to one's natural term, as though any one with ordinary capacity for enjoyment or *enjouy* would accept an extension of time on such terms. Wedge in the two hours before the turning stroke of the night—don't cultivate the excessively disagreeable habit of keeping early hours, and the world at large might be benefited by the application of that mathematical demonstration.

"A little folly now and then
Is relished by the wiser men."

And a great deal of late hours and pleasant excitement—delightful social dissipation—are relished by the most of men—and women. Nine o'clock breakfasts—or ten, and six o'clock dinners are not only *en regle* everywhere except in the depths of backwoods desolation, but decidedly more appetizing and more conducive to health than the jumble which includes a hearty supper shortly before retiring. J. D. B.

A CRYING EVIL.

"Nursing cats is all they do,
Poor old maids."

"Or! how I should hate to have any one say that about me!"

That was the remark that I heard fervently uttered by a young Miss of twelve, a few days ago!

There are no longer any children. They are men and women, with weighty projects of matrimony engaging their attention, as soon as they are twelve or fourteen years of age. From the time they can understand, they are assiduously taught that marriage is the chief object in life, and that all other things are of minor importance. As soon as they are five or six years of age they are teased about the other sex; the words "sweetheart" and "lover" are drummed into their heads, to the exclusion of almost every thing else; they are told what they must do when they go courting, or get married, and if any child is enough of a real child to think they never will get married, and venture to assert such a thing, they are met with a contemptuous "Pooh! Of course you'll get married, the same as other people."

But, my dear, good sister, drive out the poor prisoner from your thoughts entirely.

Remember he was once as innocent and pure as you, and perhaps a prayer, a smile, a good word may serve to make his life less hard to bear.

Did you know we have the power of keeping these prisoners *out* of jail? We have. We can perform many a kindly deed that is scarcely hinted at. In fact, many people seem to think that it is no matter if any one is as ignorant as a Fejee, they are perfectly well qualified to marry and rear children.

And so, year after year, the children who

ought to be playing with dolls and tops, are rushing headlong into matrimony and peopling the world with beings cursed alike with ill-health and evil dispositions, from the ignorance of their parents.

I firmly believe that of the young people who every year marry, not one in five thousand have any just idea of the responsibility of parentage. They receive the innocent souls intrusted to their care with hardly a thought of the future, and bestow upon them less care than a careful farmer would upon his stock. Care for them? Oh, yes, they feed and clothe them, doctor them when they are sick, and whip them when they are naughty—and if either duty is poorly performed, it is more by chance than anything else.

Then they are almost always poor. They don't think of the practical part of life in advance, and are surprised to find that, after a few weeks of matrimony, "love's young dream" comes down to cabbage and potatoes, and that their pockets are guiltless of filthy lucre wherewith to purchase them.

But the fact is, love has very little to do with these youthful matches. The feeling that prompts them about as nearly resembles real love as a farthing rush-light does the sunshine.

There is something dreadfully "rotten in Denmark." Somebody is to blame for all this foolishness, the consequences of which are far too serious to make any thoughtful person feel like smiling. Worse than all the rest, the evil is yearly increasing, and it seems to me that it is quite time steps were taken toward a reform.

LETTIE ARTLEY IRONS.

Foolscap Papers.

My New Post-office.

AT the earnest desire of the public I will open a new post-office on my own hook, perfectly independent of the Government, this coming week in this city. It will be carried on under the following rules:

Each person must have and pay for fourteen boxes, for he will stand fourteen chances than of getting a letter when he only stands one chance if he had but one.

If any one fails to get a letter he will

have the privilege of growling at the postmaster, who will in all cases give him the true reasons of the failure. People will be insured at least one letter a day in this office.

All persons failing to receive their daily letter will be furnished one on application (as the P. M. will keep several alphabets on hand all the time) either from abroad or of somebody else's box, or from the P. M. himself—especially if it happens to be a good-looking young lady.</p

SATURDAY JOURNAL.

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THE WINTER ROSES.

BY HARRY J. ROLT.

The winter roses sweetly bloom
At the window in my room;
Filling all the heated air
With their fragrance soft and rare.

As the chilling snow comes down
On the house-tops like a crown,
And the frost, the crystal rain
Borders every window-pane,

I then see a little room,
Where the roses bloom—
Where the golden sunshine plays
Through the short and wintry days.

Thus should ever blush and glow
Through the frost and through the snow,
Through the rime and mold of art,
The balmy roses of the heart.

The winter roses! Let them bloom,
Gentle maiden, in your room;
Mother, Sister, Friend and Wife,
Let them bloom throughout your life.

A Strange Girl: A NEW ENGLAND LOVE STORY.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "THE WOLF DEMON," "OVERLAND
KIT," "RED MAZELPA," "ACE OF SPADES,"
"HEART OF FIRE," "WITCHES OF
NEW YORK," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

LYDIA'S SECRET.

In a little, low one-story cottage in the outskirts of Saco, on the Portland road, dwelt Dinah Salisbury; Aunty Dinah, as she was known far and wide.

Our readers will remember her as the colored woman with the "yaller" dog who rescued Lydia Grame from her snowy shroud in the streets of Boston, as related in our first chapter.

Aunty Dinah made a comfortable living as a washerwoman, and the careful housewives of the twin cities praised her skill highly.

The old woman, her daily toil done, had just sat down to enjoy a cup of tea, when the dog, who had been quietly reposing on the hearth in front of the stove, raised his head, looked toward the door, and by his actions indicated as plainly as by words, that some one was coming.

"Somebody comin' eh?" the old woman questioned, rising from her seat. The dog wagged his tail at the sound of his mistress' voice.

"It's somebody that the dog knows for sure, or he'd done bark long ago," the old woman said, reflectively.

Then there came a gentle tap at the door. The old aunty opened it and Lydia Grame entered.

"Bress de Lord!" the old woman cried, in delight; "why, chile, is rose from the hearth and came up to Lydia, wagging his tail in token of amity.

The girl was dressed plainly; a dark waterproof cloak covered her form from head to foot, and she wore a light chip hat, sailor-fashion.

"I thought that I would come and see you, aunty," Lydia said, and there was a troubled expression upon her beautiful face as she spoke.

"Dat's right, chile; Ise glad dat you hain't forgotten yer old aunty."

"I have too few friends to forget any of them," the girl spoke sadly.

"Lor, honey, ye musn't speak dat way!" rejoined the old woman, caressingly. "You's got more friends dan any oder gal dat works in de mill. Everybody likes you, chile. But, I specks you're in trouble, honey; yer don't look well. Jis' sit down an' take a cup of tea an' tell yer ole aunty wot's de matter wid ye."

And the old woman, bustling about the room, placed a chair for the girl at the table. Lydia sat down, first removing her cloak and hat. It was plain from the expression upon the girl's features that she was much troubled.

"I've had supper, aunty," she said, as the old woman poured out a cup of tea for her.

"Nebber mind dat, chile; jis' you drink a cup of yer aunt's tea. Yer don't git such tea as dat everywhar. Well, I must say good-by, aunty," and Lydia rose and put on her things. "I must go, now. I is getting dark, and it is a long way home."

"Come again soon, honey."

"Yes, yes," Lydia hurried away.

On her homeward walk she passed by the Paxton mansion. A single glance she gave at the house, almost hid by the gloom of the evening, and then hurried on again, her face as white and stony as the face of a marble statue.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

DADDY EMBDEN'S GHOST.

When the buggy, driven by Nathan, drew up in front of the Embden mansion, the old man was so completely unnerved, that Nathan had to take him from the carriage as if he had been a child.

Delia had run on the look-out for her father's return, and when the buggy halted, she came out onto the steps.

"Oh, father, you are sick!" she said.

"No, I ain't sick," he muttered slowly, as, with the aid of her arm, he tottered with unsteady steps, into the house. Nathan followed close behind.

Delia led the old man into the sitting-room, placed him in an arm-chair, then in response to Nathan's beckoning hand, she came to the door which led into the hall where the hired man stood.

"What is the matter with father?" she asked, sorely troubled at the condition of the old man.

"Wal, heft's it hard to say," Nathan replied, slowly. "I drove up to the deacon's house, and got ther jest about nine, jest as you told me. And arter I got there, I thought I had better go into the house and let your father know that I was there. So I got out of the wagon, and I walked into the yard. I tumbled over somethin' all curled into a heap on the ground. I thought furst that it was some fell'er who had been drinking too much rum and had straggled into the deacon's yard to sleep it off. But when I come to examine, I found that it was your father. I got him into the buggy and he talked all the time as crazy as a bed-bug; I couldn't make head nor tail of it at furst, but arter we drove on a spell, I found out that he thought that he had seen a ghost."

"A ghost!" cried the girl in wonder.

"Sartin! a ghost wrapped up in a mil-tary cloak and wearin' a straw hat."

"But did he see any thing?"

"Wal, now, furst off, I thought mebbe that he had seen somebody passing in the street, who looked like somebody that he

once knew, and who was dead. But arter we got over the bridge and was coming up the hill, he dropped down in a faint ag'in, and when I roused him out of it, he said, emphatically.

For a few moments Lydia was silent; as she had suspected, Sinclair's attentions to her had been noticed, and already people had begun to couple their names together.

"And do they say that a rich man like Mr. Paxton thinks of marrying a poor girl like myself?" she asked.

"Yes, honey. Yer ain't had a quarrel wid him?"

"No, no, but it is to ask your advice in regard to Mr. Paxton that I came to see you to-night."

"Dat's right, honey; I'll do de best I kin for you," the old woman observed, encouragingly.

"Mr. Paxton has been very kind to me ever since I came to the mill; he is the treasurer there, you know?"

The old woman nodded.

"And he has told me that he loves me and that he wishes me to become his wife."

"Dat's w'at I'd like to see, honey!" the old woman exclaimed, exultantly. "Fore de Lord! I'd walk a hundred miles fur to see dat!"

"But, aunty, suppose I can not be his wife?"

Dinah stared at her for a moment in astonishment.

"Why, chile? dat's w'at I'd like to know?"

"He is a rich man while I am only a poor girl."

"Dat's nuffin'—dat don't count, nohow!"

"But, if there is another reason?" Lydia added, and then she hesitated as if undecided whether to go on or stop. Then with a sudden movement, she set her lips tight together for a moment and the look of hesitation vanished.

"Aunty, I must speak plainly with you, for you are the only one in this world to whom I can go for counsel. There is a reason why I should not marry Sinclair Paxton. There is a man living, who, if I married Mr. Paxton, would hold me absolutely in his power. I should be his slave, obliged to do his will, and if my husband by any chance should happen to discover my unhappy secret, he might drive me from him with curses—with loathing, and I should deserve to be treated so."

"Bress de Lord, chile!" exclaimed the old woman, in astonishment. "I don't understand dis yer."

"And I can not fully explain, except that there is a dark secret connected with my early life. It was that secret pressing on my brain and driving me almost to madness that made me seek death in the snowbank from which you rescued me. Now, aunty, I'll tell you what I came to ask. This man who possesses such a terrible hold upon me, knows of Mr. Paxton's love for me. He has offered that if I will give him a certain sum of money he will go away, so that I can marry Mr. Paxton, and promised that I shall never see him again. Now, aunty, is it right for me to do this—to marry this gentleman, knowing as I do, that if this man does not keep his word and should return, I doon' both my husband and myself to a lifetime of misery?"

"An' can't you tell Mister Paxton all 'bout dis yer thing?" the old woman asked, thoughtfully.

"No; I can not tell him, for if he knew my secret, our marriage would be impossible," Lydia replied, slowly.

"Don't you have nuffin' to do wid him, then, honey; dat ain't right; dat ain't corin' to de Good Book; don't you do it, chile!" the negress said, decidedly.

"That is what my own heart has told me a hundred times, but I am so weak, so irresolute, and this man loves me so well. When I am with him I think that I could dare every thing—risk all for his sake!" Lydia said, hurriedly and in strange excitement.

"Don't you do it, honey! Act fa'r an' square; dat's de only way to git along in dis yere world."

"You are right! He must forget me and I must forget him, and may Heaven give us both strength to bear our cross. Well, I must say good-by, aunty," and Lydia rose and put on her things. "I must go, now. I is getting dark, and it is a long way home."

"Come again soon, honey."

"Yes, yes," Lydia hurried away.

On her homeward walk she passed by the Paxton mansion. A single glance she gave at the house, almost hid by the gloom of the evening, and then hurried on again, her face as white and stony as the face of a marble statue.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE HERMIT TRAPPER.

BY OLL COOMES,

AUTHOR OF "HAWKEYE HARRY," "BOY SPY,"

"BRONIESIDE, THE SCOUT," "DEATH-NOTCH,"

"THE DESTROYER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VIII.

A BAND OF HORSEMEN.

Over the great plain, and down toward the settlement of Mount Prairie, galloped a band of horsemen at a breakneck speed.

The half-nude forms, their painted faces and plumed heads told that they were a band of savage warriors with mischief in their hearts, for their faces were streaked and ringed with war paint until they appeared like very demons of hideousness.

They bestrode strong-limbed mustang ponies, and were armed with rifle, tomahawk and scalping-knife.

They galloped furiously on until at length they gained the summit of a swell in the prairie, from whence Mount Prairie and the oak openings were just discernible away to the southward.

The Sioux chieftain drew rein, and his band, numbering a score and ten, followed his example.

"Look away yonder, my braves," he said, pointing toward the settlement, "you will see the wigwams of the pale-faces nestled in among the groves where the red-man used to take the deer."

"I'm sick at heart, Delie; that's where I'm sick," he said, slowly.

"Shan't I mix you some hot rum, father?"

"Yas, yas," he replied, quickly; "I want somethin' to steady my nerves; I'm only a wrack, now."

So Delia went and prepared the hot drink, which the old man snuffed eagerly.

"That's what your mother used to fix up for me," he said, slowly and reflectively, while a tear stood in his eye. "Many's the squally night I've managed to run after a hard northeast blow and found your mother sitting up and waiting for me. If she had only lived I never would have done it; but the devil fished for my soul; he baited his hook with a great lot of money, and he caught me, poor sinner that I am. The deacon says too, that I'll roar in hell-fire. Oh Lord!" and the old man groaned aloud in misery.

The girl had listened in utter amazement to the strange words which had fallen from her father's lips.

"Why, father, how could the deacon say such a cruel thing as that of you?" she asked in wonder.

"He didn't know that it was me, Delie," the old man moaned. "The deacon has known me man and boy for forty year. He never knew me to wrong anybody out of a penny. The Biddeford folks used to say, 'Skipper Emden's a hard man at a bargain, but he's honest to a cent, and only wants what's coming to him. There wasn't a man, woman or child from Boston to the Kennebec that wouldn't trust the skipper of the Nancy Jane; they wouldn't believe that I was a thief, and a red-handed murderer."

"No; I can not tell him, for if he knew my secret, our marriage would be impossible," Lydia replied, slowly.

"Oh, father!" cried the girl with tears in her eyes, "you mustn't say such dreadful things."

"But it's truth, gal. Oh, I'm a dreadful man!" and Emden moaned in agony.

"Now, father, don't speak that way," Lydia said, caressingly, "why, if any one should hear you speak like that they would surely think that you were crazy."

"Oh, if I could only think so!" the old man muttered; "if I could only make myself believe that I was crazy on that dreadful night. Oh, how it all comes back to me. I kin see it now, just as plain as I did then. Arter he was dead, he followed me down the river, and as I looked over the stern, I seed him a-floatin' on his back, and a-starin' up at me, as much as to say, 'I'll never leave you, and he never has, really, for I see him all the time, no matter where I am.'

"Why don't you try and think of something else, father?" the girl said, coaxingly.

"Yes, I know," the old man said, shaking his head sorrowfully. "You think that I don't know what I'm talking about, but I do. I ain't crazy. He knelt down and prayed for me, poor sinner that I am. I felt better arter I heard him pray. I kinder lifted my soul up, I kinder thought how my mother used to pray for me when I was running round, a barefooted boy. It's pretty hard for a God-fearing man, who has lived an honest life for forty years, to turn all of a sudden into a pesky villain. The deacon says I must give it all up, and so I will, but, Lord! I can't bring back the life that's gone. We can take it away, but we can't restore it."

"Now, father, try and don't talk this way," the girl smoothed back the bristly hair of the old man caressingly.

"I know you think I'm wrong; Nathan thought that I was crazy to-night when I said that I saw it on the street."

"What father?"

"The ghost."

"But whose ghost?"

"Why, the man who floated down the Rappahannock."

All this was a mystery to the girl. One thing only was plain to her, and that was that her father was laboring under the pressure of a strong mental excitement.

"Wal, heft's it hard to say," Nathan replied, slowly. "I drove up to the deacon's house, and got ther jest about nine, jest as you told me. And arter I got there, I thought I had better go into the house and let your father know that I was there. So I got out of the wagon, and I walked into the yard. I tumbled over somethin' all curled into a heap on the ground. I thought furst that it was some fell'er who had been drinking too much rum and had straggled into the deacon's yard to sleep it off. But when I come to examine, I found that it was my father. I got him into the buggy and he talked all the time as crazy as a bed-bug; I couldn't make head nor tail of it at furst, but arter we drove on a spell, I found out that he thought that he had seen a ghost."

"A ghost!" cried the girl in wonder.

"Sartin! a ghost wrapped up in a mil-tary cloak and wearin' a straw hat."

"But did he see any thing?"

"Wal, now, furst off, I thought mebbe that he had seen somebody passing in the street, who looked like somebody that he

once knew, and who was dead. But arter we got over the bridge and was coming up the hill, he dropped down in a faint ag'in, and when I roused him out of it, he said that he had seen the ghost ag'in."

"But did you see any thing?"

"Not a thing; and when I found

Short wings put out from each side of the monster; and lent an additional terror to its dragon-like appearance. But these wings were used as propellers, as a fish uses its fins, and much on the same principle that an aquatic fowl uses its web-feet in swimming. When the wings had spent their force against the water, they would close, disappear under the surface of the water, and instantly appear forward, when they would again spread out, strike the water like oars, and again disappear under the surface and appear, like a sudden flash, forward for a new stroke.

It was a terrible creature; and as it shot forward toward the savages, its breast cleaving the waves like a sharp prow of a boat, and the water fairly foaming in its wake, it was a sight well calculated to strike terror to the heart of the superstitious savage.

Even the whites were held spell-bound with a species of wonder and horror, at sight of the wonderful Monster with its glowing eyes and yawning mouth.

Some of them clutched their rifles as if to shoot the dragon, while detective Dart, as if under the influence of some horrible fascination, glided to the water's very edge, and leaning forward, supported by a bush, gazed with starting eyeballs at the creature.

Waucoosta being a white man, and possessed of less superstition than his savage comrades, recovered in a moment his sudden terror, and raising his rifle, fired upon the advancing monster. But his aim was unsteady, or else the creature was invulnerable to bullets, for it still came on.

Possessed anew with terror, the renegade chief seized the paddle and attempted to turn the canoe, and seek safety in flight.

But just as he had turned the craft in a course at right-angles with that of the Monster, the breast of the latter struck the side of the canoe. There was a crash, the side of the frail bark craft was stove in, and the next moment the savages were floundering in the water, while the Monster, sinking glowering almost from view, glided away and was soon lost from the sight of our friends in the darkness along the shore.

It required but a minute for the terrified savages to reach the shore and plunge into the dense shadows of the forest, and then our friends realized a feeling of relief—relief from the terrible silence that had been imposed upon them.

"Ay, friend Dart," said Captain Disbrowe, "what do you think of that?"

"Quite a drama, quite a drama, Cap. Beat's any thing I ever saw; and demmy if it don't try one's nerves!" replied the detective, betraying some excitement, which, however, seemed feigned.

"That Monster is a terrible thing—a creature unknown to zoologists of this age. Quite a wonder, quite a terror. Ha! ha! but didn't it make those savages git up and dust?"

"Yes; it seemed to have a withering effect on their nerves," replied young Harry Thomas.

"I, presume," said Captain Disbrowe, "they will not venture back in this neighborhood soon again; but, by Jupiter! we came within an ace of getting our hair lifted by those skulking rascals." But then, a miss as good as a mile, so we may as well adjourn to our camp."

So saying, the party returned to the camp. The fire was replenished with fuel, and the little party again seated themselves within its cheerful glow. The Monster of the Lake now furnished a theme for conversation. The detective expressed his opinion freely in regard to it, and argued with ability that it was a species of the monstrous Saurians, such as those whose remains are found by geological researches in the Eocene Period, or Age of Reptiles.

And so the conversation ran on until the party were suddenly startled by the sound of footsteps and a strong, coarse voice:

"Tickle my ole scalp, if you ain't a likel

ly set of tars to have your' scups on, when the red-hounds of Satan are swarnin' thick hereways."

"Old Solitary, as I live!" exclaimed Captain Disbrowe, advancing with extended hand to meet the old trapper; "right glad am I to meet you—heavens, man! I don't crush my hand in your iron fingers!"

"Wal, my boys," said the old trapper, dropping the butt of his rifle to the ground, and clasping his hands over the muzzle of the piece, which he leaned slightly forward upon, "what's prises me is to see you squatin' here, in camp, with yer hal' all on."

"I suppose our safety is owing to the Monster of the Lake," said Harry Thomas.

"The Monster! Whew! have you seen that critter to night?"

"Yes," replied Thomas, "less than an hour ago."

"The dickens, you say! That Monster makes the ice rattle down a fell'r's back like rip—little! a stranger?" and for the first time the old trapper's eyes fell upon detective Dart.

"A friend of mine, Old Solitary, Jabez Dart, of Ohio, detective by profession," said Captain Disbrowe.

"Jabez Dart, detective, eh?" exclaimed Old Solitary; "glad to meet you, ole coon; give us a wag of your paw."

The detective advanced and acknowledged the pleasure of the old trapper's acquaintance in a cordial manner. They exchanged a few words, and then all the party—but Old Solitary seated himself before the fire again.

"Sit down, Solitary," said Disbrowe, "sit down and rest your bones!"

"Nay, nay, captain; you never catch this ole carcass reposin' in ease when that's kits of red-skins ravin' around like hungry coyotes."

"Why, Solitary, are the red-skins so thick in these woods?" asked the captain.

"Plenty's frogs along the lake." It war

only a bit ago that I let the daylight out

of one of the buggers, and spread the nose

of another over his greasy phiz. Yes, boys, trouble may be expected from the Sioux now.

Bullets and hal' will fly like sand,

and altho' I have no desire to have my meat-house punctured with a chunk of lead, I'll take my chances with the rest.

No, the Sioux are not goin' to stand by the treaty of the Fox and Sac tribes, and are determined to make their vengeance be felt fur not includin' the in the pow-wow.

But, if devility's their game, scalps is my checker, and a high ole time we'll have!"

"Truly, truly," said detective Dart, "you old codgers speak of killing and skinning Indians like beaver. Now, if it is fun, I wouldn't mind a short spell of it, for I'm old 'pizen' on a shot and lively times in general."

"Wal, now, Ole Pizen," returned the trapper, with a pleasant chuckle, "if you love fun so well, just come with me a spell, and we'll go and make a reconnaissance 'bout these diggin's afore we all indulge in too much carelessness."

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"Wal, now, Ole Pizen," returned the trapper, with a pleasant chuckle, "if you love fun so well, just come with me a spell, and we'll go and make a reconnaissance 'bout these diggin's afore we all indulge in too much carelessness."

"Wal, Cap, what diskiery did you make?" asked the old trapper.

"The woods are swarming with Indians, and I would suggest that this camp-fire be

"I'm your man!" exclaimed Dart, springing to his feet, and taking up the rifle with which he had been provided, at Mound Prairie; "lead the way, Mr. Solitary, and if I git lost just whistle."

"Whistle?" reiterated the trapper, "now, Pizen, if you don't want to lose your ha', don't speak above a whisper arter we are outen sight of that fire. Mind ye, we can't go callin' to one another like a couple of children huntin' posies in the woods of Ohio. No siree; you must step like a cat, fur we're a couple of hunters, goin' out arter scalps."

"Lead the way, Solitary, lead the way," returned Dart, impatiently.

The old trapper took the lead, closely followed by the light-footed detective, leaving the other six seated before the fire, their sides convulsed with suppressed laughter over the trapper's advice and the blunt remarks of the detective.

The two moved slowly until some distance from the camp, then they quickened their footstep, and, after journeying a couple hundred yards, they pushed their way through a dense thicket and entered a little glade, where it was so light that the rays of the moon seemed to have concentrated there in a focus.

Walking to the center of this opening, Old Solitary stopped, and, turning about, dropped the butt of his rifle to the ground, as was his custom when standing, and, gazing down upon the detective—who seemed a pigmy by the side of him—said, in a slow, decided tone:

"And you are Jabez Dart, the detective, eh?"

The detective made no reply, more than to draw a slip of paper from an inner pocket and hand it to the trapper.

"Do you know that?" Dart asked.

The old woodman took the paper and gazed at the scrawling writing upon it, with that innocent, childlike ignorance of one who does not know one letter from another.

"Read it, Dart," he said, passing it back to the detective; "then I can tell more about it."

Dart took the paper and read as follows:

"JABEZ DART.—Come at once to Silver Lake, in the Territory of Iowa, and you will hear something in regard to the Hart's Ford murder."

"Old SOLITARY, THE HERMIT TRAPPER."

"That's it," said the trapper, "that's it."

"And now what do you know about the Hart's Ford murder?" questioned Dart.

"Sh! silence! to the shadows!" he heard footstep demand the trapper, and leading the way, they glided across the opening and into the deep shadows.

"Here they listened. They heard the tread of a heavy foot.

"Is it a savage?" asked Dart, in a whisper.

"Not a bit of it, Pizen. An Injin walks like a cat, and wears moccasins, but that feller walks like a buck, and's got boots on!"

"Verily!" returned Dart, in his careless manner.

"Yes, and tickle my scalp if I don't foller him, and see who it is, and whar he's goin'. Stay right here, Pizen, till I return."

"So—so—all right."

And Jabez Dart was alone, before the

CHAPTER X.

AN ARROW IN CAMP.

AFTER Old Solitary and Jabez Dart left the camp, Captain Disbrowe and his party relapsed into that ease and fearlessness that comes of a sense of security. For, since the old trapper had made his appearance at their camp, all dangers seemed to have vanished.

But this they soon found was really not the case. Something whizzed through the air and struck with a dull thud, the tree against which Captain Disbrowe was reclining.

"Indians!" involuntarily burst from the lips of one of the party, and the next instant every man was upon his feet.

Captain Disbrowe turned and saw, quivering in the tree within three inches of where his head had reclined, an arrow.

The barbed point was half buried in the wood, and around the shaft he saw something like a piece of thin parchment carefully wrapped.

Snatching the arrow from the tree, the captain turned to his comrades, and said:

"Boys, let us fall back under cover of the darkness. There are Indians about, and this fire will tell them where to strike."

"Curse you," he hissed, "I will strangle the life out of your body."

With rifles in hand, the hunters glided into the shadows beyond the radius of their firelight. Captain Disbrowe found that he was alone when he had gained point of safety, his comrades having taken a different course.

With the mysterious arrow still in his hand, he moved on until he had gained a little moonlit opening, where he stopped and examined the missile. True enough, he found the shaft had been wrapped with a gauze-like strip of fine dressed buck-skin, and on removing this from the shaft, he saw it was written on with red ink, or the juice of the wild grape, in a rude but legible hand, which he was enabled to read by the moonlight, and which ran thus:

"DEAR ROLL—Meet me forthwith on the peninsula, or north side of lake. *Huld'y*

"Sit down, Solitary," said Disbrowe, "sit down and rest your bones!"

"Nay, nay, captain; you never catch

this ole carcass reposin' in ease when that's

kits of red-skins ravin' around like hungry

coyotes."

"Why, Solitary, are the red-skins so

thick in these woods?" asked the captain.

"Plenty's frogs along the lake." It war

only a bit ago that I let the daylight out

of one of the buggers, and spread the nose

of another over his greasy phiz. Yes, boys, trouble may be expected from the Sioux now.

Bullets and hal' will fly like sand,

and altho' I have no desire to have my meat-house punctured with a chunk of lead, I'll take my chances with the rest.

No, the Sioux are not goin' to stand by the treaty of the Fox and Sac tribes, and are determined to make their vengeance be felt fur not includin' the in the pow-wow.

But, if devility's their game, scalps is my checker, and a high ole time we'll have!"

"Truly, truly," said detective Dart, "you old codgers speak of killing and skinning Indians like beaver. Now, if it is fun, I wouldn't mind a short spell of it, for I'm old 'pizen' on a shot and lively times in general."

"Wal, now, Ole Pizen," returned the trapper, with a pleasant chuckle, "if you love fun so well, just come with me a spell, and we'll go and make a reconnaissance 'bout these diggin's afore we all indulge in too much carelessness."

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"

Be then tranquil as a dove;
Through these thunder-clouds above
Shines afar the heaven of love!
Never mind!"—TUPPER.

As Theophilus Onnorram hurried through a street not far from his own residence, his attention was attracted by a barouche that came swiftly along, with spirited horses chafing under a tight rein.

It was the one containing Hugh Winfield and Ilde Wyn.

We have seen that the Doctor was immediately struck with Ilde's resemblance to Zella Kearn, and, also, that he discovered Zella, by an accidental glance up at the third-story windows of the house directly opposite.

While considering what she could be doing there, he almost involuntarily crossed over and pulled the door-bell.

"I wish to see Miss Kearn," he said, to the servant who appeared.

"Miss Kearn?" repeated the girl, inquiring.

"Yes—the young lady who occupies a third-story front room?"

"Oh, you mean the new boarder? Yes, sir. Walk in, please," and, ushering him into the parlor, she asked:

"What name shall I say, sir?"

"Um! well—just tell her that Doctor Onnorram would like to see her."

While the servant started on her errand up-stairs, the physician stood in the center of the parlor, stroking his smooth chin, and gazing thoughtfully down at the carpet.

"New boarder, eh? I wonder what that means. Zella Kearn generally goes to her aunt's when she comes to town—now she don't, and she's a boarder. A boarder?"—repeating the word as if it meant more than he could understand. "Rather queer, this. Wonder if she's alone? If yes, then what's she doing at a strange house?—a boarder—um! a boarder, too?"

It did seem that Heaven was unkind, in sending Hugh Winfield to Zella's gaze, when the unhappy girl had striven so hard to forget him, and to smother the gnawings of her rejected love.

It had cost her every effort of will she was capable of, to do what she had done—say good-by to all the dear scenes about her home—dear in themselves, though they reminded her bitterly of him to whose heart she had turned in vain.

It was but a sort of apathy, this new life among strangers—a life of trance amid surroundings that were drear.

The shapely head, drooping upon her arm, on the window sill, was trembling, as she sobbed; and she felt, in this fresh pain, as if existence was burdensome—as if she did not, and could never, care for anything.

She had a strong will; but there is no limit to the influences of an absorbing, passionate love—the most rigid hearts will melt, and resolutions of iron are overcome beneath its penetrating power.

All the determination to forget Hugh Winfield, which had been hers, now vanished, and left her with a bleeding heart, a weeping spirit—a being of veriest wretchedness, in atmospheres of woe.

"Oh, Hugh!—Hugh!" she moaned, "I thought you loved me! When you spoke, or in whatever you did, I thought—yes, I was sure I saw some sign of affection. You told me you did love me; but, is it true? Would you let me suffer in this way, if it was so?" but she added, after a second, as if she would not blame him:

"You don't know, though—you don't know; you'll never know, Hugh, what misery you have caused me—no—never!"

She raised her tearful eyes to look once again down the street.

But, the barouche was gone; only the busy, bustling throng met her straining gaze.

"Come," she said, after a moment, when the heaving bosom was forced to calmness, and her voice schooled to evenness.

"There's a gentleman in the parlor to see you, Miss," announced the girl, who entered.

"To see me?" in surprise; "who is it?

What is his name?"

"He told me just to say, that Doctor Onnorram would like to see you."

"Doctor Onnorram?" repeated Zella, in growing astonishment; and she asked herself: "How did he find out I was here? What can he want?"

Zella colored slightly. It certainly would not look proper to receive a visitor in her bedroom; yet she resolved to do this, as she did not wish to be seen by the boarders, several of whom were just then returning for dinner. Besides, the caller was a physician, and—"

"I will receive him here," she replied, to the girl's question before she finished debating the point in her mind.

"Yes, Miss."

Doctor Onnorram was presently ushered in. He entered with a bow and a smile, rubbing his skinny hands together—a habit he had—and spoke in a pleasant tone.

"Miss Kearn—quite a surprise. How do you, to-day? Hope I see you well. Ah, yes—quite a surprise, indeed. I didn't expect to find you in the city—as a boarder, too."

"Be seated, Doctor. Are you well?"

"Always well—always well, thank you, my dear."

At first sound of her voice he detected sadness in it. He saw that she was pale, uneasy of manner, much unlike herself.

"I do not think you are in good health, my dear," he said, solicitously, appropriating a chair, and watching her closely.

Zella would not meet his gaze.

"Yes, Doctor, I am feeling very badly. I can not deny it—but, not exactly sick: I—indeed, I scarcely know what is the matter with me."

"You are decidedly sick. Permit me."

He slipped snakily from his chair, advanced, felt of her pulse, trying, while he held the white wrist, not to look grave.

"Um! Extraordinary nervousness. How long have you been in town?"

"Not long," answered Zella, after some hesitation.

"That's an evasion," thought Onnorram, watching her half-averted face. "Now what does she mean by that?" then aloud:

"Yesterday?—day before?—to-day?"

"Yesterday," reluctantly.

"Um! Yes. Let me prescribe for you,

my dear. Have you anybody here that you can send to the nearest apothecary?"

"Oh, it's of no consequence, Doctor,—"

"Tut! Tut! don't talk nonsense now. You are on the verge of hysterics, I see that plainly."

He stepped over to the bell-rope, despite her protestations; then, while he resumed his seat, and took out his diary to write, he inquired:

"Your father well?"

"Yes—I believe so."

He darted a momentary glance at her, over the spectacles, and commented mentally:

"That's another evasion. What's the matter with her? She's sombre as a ghost, and she used to be frolicsome as a kitten."

But he was completely baffled.

"Something wrong—something wrong, I must sift this."

After one of the servants had been despatched to the nearest drug-store, he set about trying to ascertain why she was there, exactly when she came, and what had caused the sudden change in her—transforming her from a merry, laughing girl, to a pale, saddened woman.

She evaded his questioning, with the readiness of female wit.

After doing his best, in vain, in a conversation of nearly two hours, he withdrew.

"Confound it!" he muttered, as he left the house, "I am no wiser for my labor. But I'll see her again to-morrow. I am determined to know what this means. Something wrong—I'll wager on it. Alas! she's a fine girl—very fine. She must be my wife, too, shortly. Yes, friend Kearn—marry the first to him who tried to win the widow whose first love died." This little beauty must marry Theophilus Onnorram, or you'll never find out where your own child is—so help me cross-bones! Well, you young rascal—stop your screaming! Hear me?" the last to a ragged newsboy, with dirty face, who came running and screaming loudly, flourishing the evening paper.

"Buy one, sir?—full account of the strange death on the Bellefontaine Road."

"Death on the Bellefontaine, oh?" he stopped short, as he questioned, and looked sharply down at the urchin.

"Yes, sir. Big thing. Found dead; and full of blood. Heap of excitement, sir."

"Yes—I'll read it," and as he received and paid for the paper, he was mumbling: "Wonder what it is, now. Bellefontaine? That's pretty close. It might be that Kearn has—"

He was about to fold the journal up, and ram it into his pocket, when he felt a sudden prompting to look at the item of import.

It was on the first page, in display type, and he glanced carelessly at the account.

Immediately, however, he uttered a quick exclamation, his face assumed a rigid expression, and he half-crunched the paper in his grasp.

CHAPTER XX.

A TRIO OF SPIES.

We meet again when years have flown,
When time has wrought a wondrous change,
But do not meet as if unknown
In scenes of silence, awe and strange.—ANON.

BIG DAN stood, for a moment, before the entrance to the hallway leading to Doctor Onnorram's office.

Then he passed in—not like one calling on a matter of business, but in a way that would have excited the suspicions of a looker-on.

Inside the door, he paused, and drew off his boots—then he listened.

"Somethin' 's wrong," he muttered. "I don't know, though—you don't know; you'll never know, Hugh, what misery you have caused me—no—never!"

The head would have bowed again, and a new gush of tears was dimming her vision; when there came a gentle tap at the door.

She started, and hurriedly dried her cheeks.

"Come," she said, after a moment, when the heaving bosom was forced to calmness, and her voice schooled to evenness.

"There's a gentleman in the parlor to see you, Miss," announced the girl, who entered.

"To see me?" in surprise; "who is it?

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MY SYLVAN SYLPH.

BY JOE JOT. JR.

I'll ne'er forget when first we met,
Full many a scented rose
Bloomed by the door in which she sat—
Industriously putting new heels in some old
woolen hose.

And I approached as in a dream,
Unconsciously and slow,
And biess her, she did hasten out—
And made me that everlasting old bulldog let
go!

And oh, she had the sweetest voice!
My fond ear ever knew!
My memory seems to hear it yet—
In "Why, lawsses alive, mister, how
do?"

I marvelled at her blushing hair
Which fell in many a coil,
And needed nothing in the world—
Except two or three handfuls of scented
beau's oil.

I thought she was a fairy sprite
That walked upon the air,
Or trod like Venus on the wave—
And I saw the size of her shoes I
thought my gress was rather fair.

She were a gentle winking smile—
Which trouble could not break,
Her eyes were full of tenderness—
And her mouth, which was none too small,
was generally pretty full of cake.

Her heart, so good, was ever warm
With love for all her kind,
I knew it when she softly said—
"Alabamas, go chase those piggies out and
don't you hurt them, mind!"

She shot her bow when first we met,
But I adm'r her still—
And none can calculate her worth—
Her everlasting old father hasn't taken a
notion yet to get sick and make his will!

A Woman's Scheme.
A SKETCH OF CITY LIFE.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

One cool night in October, during the present lustrum, "Daring Val," one of the boldest, and consequently most noted cracksmen of New York, leaned over the counter of a low underground "thieves' treat," scanning the "Personals" of a prominent city journal.

This man had committed more burglaries than any two thieves then in the city, and the papers, uttering the sentiments of the law-abiding citizens, clamored loudly for his apprehension. But he adroitly eluded the police, and continued to pursue his nefarious calling in their very faces.

It was rumored, and rightly, too, as our story will show, that "Daring Val," as the burglar was called by everybody, had been employed by wealthy persons to carry out their petty revenge, and was still in the employ of scheming men and women.

The cracksmen's eyes ran down the "Personal column," upon the October night above written, until they suddenly rested upon the following advertisement, which struck him very forcibly:

"PERSONAL. Will the gentleman, with the gold anchor, who sat opposite the lady in green silk in the — avenue cars, yesterday, please call at No. — Fourth avenue, between the hours of seven and nine to-night?"

The burglar read the advertisement twice before he uttered a word.

"Why, that must mean me," he said, slightly above a whisper. "I was dressed in my best, yesterday, and sported a gold anchor, and rode in the — avenue cars, opposite the lady in green silk. How she eyed me then! Her garments told me she was in good circumstances, although they bore marks of long wear. Yes," after a long pause, "I'll go and see what she wants of Val Rettick. It's about six now."

The adroit scoundrel folded the paper and walked leisurely from the den.

Twenty minutes later he reappeared, attired in a suit of broadcloth, fashionably cut. His mass of raven hair betrayed the presence of an oleaginous compound, and a heavy gold chain, from which dangled the anchor which had attracted the attention of "the lady in green," contrasted glitteringly with his white vest.

He stepped to the bar, and after emptying a wine-glass with a single gulp, he strode from the apartment, imitating a dandy's gait, to the amusement of several criminal companions.

Once upon the street, he entered a car, and presently stood beneath the particular number on Fourth avenue designated by the "personal."

He rung the bell with the air of a refined gentleman, which he could admirably counterfeit, and was ushered into the richest appointed parlor he had ever entered.

After bestowing a look upon several superb pictures that adorned the walls, the dandy burglar threw himself upon a rich sofa, and toyed with his chain, until the rustle of silk saluted his ears.

A moment later the door opened, and a beautiful woman, attired in green silk, heavily flounced, swept into the apartment.

The recognition was mutual.

The lady glanced at Rettick's "gold anchor," and smilingly complimented him for answering her "personal" so promptly.

"I know you, sir," she said, after a brief exchange of words. "You are daring Val Rettick, the burglar, and sir, I advertised to tell you that I have work for you—work that, if well performed, will fill your pockets with greenbacks."

"I am ever ready to work for those who pay without stint," answered Val. "And I would be pleased to know what I have to do in this case. The greater the risk, the better the reward."

The woman in green smiled, and drew nearer the thief.

"My uncle," she said, in a low tone, "lies upon the point of death. He is rich—will leave a cool hundred thousand behind him. Years ago, when I was a little girl and an orphan, he took me to his home, and proclaimed me the heiress to his wealth. I dwelt in peace with him until two years ago, when, in a fit of anger, of which I, unavoidably, was the remote cause, he drove me from his roof, and took a beggar to his hearth, whom he now calls his heiress."

"I am satisfied," she continued, "that the will he once drew up bequeathed his all to me, for he is childless, is destroyed, and that a new one lies beyond the insecure doors of his old cabinet. I want that will. With it in my power, I can make Violet Fortney a beggar indeed, and become mistress of the situation again. What sum do you demand for the work?"

"Describe the risk,"

The lady did so.

"I will disguise myself in plain garments, and await you on the pavement, near the alley," she continued.

"Well," said Rettick, "I accept your aid, and, in consideration of the neat sum of five thousand dollars, shall complete the work to your satisfaction."

The woman agreed to pay the sum demanded, and the following night was selected for the dark work.

Val Rettick took his leave.

Julia Coleman felt her uncle's will within her grasp.

She paced the room with a triumphant and self-satisfied air, picturing to herself Violet Fortney's reverse of fortune.

It was her fault that she did not fill Violet's place, at that hour, beside the bed of her dying uncle.

William Coleman loved his niece until her pride and stubbornness compelled him to drive her from his presence.

The ambitious girl became fascinated by a sudden arrival—a handsome fellow, with foreign airs, who called himself Count La Boyteaux. In vain the old man tried to persuade Julia that the dandy was a heartless adventurer. She hung upon his footsteps, and one night, having yielded to the villain's blandishments—having made her self his slave—she attempted to rob her master; but was detected by the old man.

Then finding his niece beyond reformation, Willard Coleman, with tears in his eyes for his brother's memory, drove her from his house, and resolved to try and forget her.

Several nights later a poor sewing-machine girl saved him from several villains who were dogging his steps, and, to reward her, he took her to his luxuriant home, and thus Violet Fortney became the old man's heiress.

As the reader has seen, Julia told Daring Val quite a different story from the foregoing.

Soon La Boyteaux deserted his deluded victim, and she entered the house of a wealthy merchant as a governess, resolving to bide her time for revenge.

The city clocks were proclaiming the hour of eleven upon the night following the interview between the fair employer and

the chief officers were congratulating themselves upon the efficacy of their arrangements, by which all predators were set at defiance, when suddenly the shock came, dissipating these fond expectations to the four winds.

Early one morning, while leisurely sipping his coffee, the president, who was generally at the bank first of all, was aroused by the sharp clatter of horse's hoofs upon the gravelled walk outside, and



her tool, when two persons came together on the corner of Third avenue and Fourth street.

They met as if by accident; but their subsequent actions proclaimed the meeting one of design.

The woman, for one of the twain was a representative of the tender sex, was plainly clad, and the man wore a tightly-buttoned coat with great collar, and a slouched hat.

After a short conversation they moved off together, and presently the man entered a dark alley, at the mouth of which the woman stationed herself as a kind of sentry.

The man moved off in the gloom. Then he drew a dark-lantern from his bosom, and opened an old cabinet that stood in the room he had burglariously entered. In a drawer he found a manuscript, which he glanced over, and then took it to an inner pocket.

A minute later he left the apartment as noiselessly as he had entered.

Sliding from the roof, he hurried toward the street where the woman waited; but, just as he emerged from the alley an intoxicated Hibernian, in his efforts to escape a policeman, stumbled and struck him in the breast with his head, with such force as to hurl both to the stones!

The woman screamed at the catastrophe, and before Daring Val, the will-stealer, could recover, two policemen stood over him.

"Release that Celt," said one, "for he has placed a rich prize in our power."

The speaker had recognized "Daring Val."

Julia Coleman heard the words, and turned to fly.

"No, my covey!" said a gruff voice, and she felt her arm in the vice-like grip of a blue-coated M. P.

A woman's scheme had signally failed.

At the station-house the stolen will was taken from Val Rettick, and returned to a securer place than the old cabinet.

Willard Coleman died without hearing of Julia's sentence of servitude in the State prison; but they told him of Daring Val's execution for a crime committed years before.

After diligent inquiry Violet found the Irishman who had baffled the schemer, and handsomely rewarded him. He is now a reformed man.

Violet married shortly after the above occurrence.

A WAG one day asked his friend, "How many knaves do you suppose are in this street besides yourself?" "Besides myself?" replied the other, in a passion: "do you mean to insult me?" "Well, then," replied the first, "how many do you reckon, including yourself?"

Recollections of the West.

"Foxing" for Burglars.

BY CAPT. "BRUIN" ADAMS.

ONLY those who were in San Francisco in the early days, actually on the ground and observers of what took place, can have any true conception of the extent to which lawlessness and crime were carried.

Vigilance committees were promptly organized, but in very many cases their efforts were paralyzed by some traitor in their midst giving early information to suspected parties, or warning those already known as guilty in time for them to escape the doom that awaited them.

Such was the condition of affairs in that city when the Merchants' and Mechanics' Bank was first opened. The strong stone building stood near the center of a row of substantial business houses on the principal thoroughfare, and with its barred and heavily-shuttered windows, and massive double-door, it was considered impregnable, no matter how determined or skillful might be the efforts of those seeking to enter in any other than the proper way. Besides these safeguards the usual night watchman was always locked in, and then nothing more could be done—at least, so it was thought.

For several months the affairs of the bank progressed smoothly. The officers and *attaches*, among whom was myself, as assistant book-keeper, fell into the usual groove of banking work, and up to the time of which I am about to speak, nothing had occurred to break its monotony.

The chief officers were congratulating themselves upon the efficacy of their arrangements, by which all predators were set at defiance, when suddenly the shock came, dissipating these fond expectations to the four winds.

Early one morning, while leisurely sipping his coffee, the president, who was generally at the bank first of all, was aroused by the sharp clatter of horse's hoofs upon the gravelled walk outside, and

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